Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee

Country: New Zealand

Agenda Item: The Regulation of Chemical Weapon Possession and Usage

For many centuries, chemical weapons have been used in wars, conflicts and for some harmless intentions like agricultural and medical purposes. The destructive purposes which the chemical weapons have mainly been used for resulted in environmental problems, distress and complicated situations. Having been used since 1000 BC, it wasn’t until 19th century that the the international community realized its possible results to the community and environment. After perceiving these hazards, authorities promptly took the needed measures in order to dispose chemical weapons. Several acts and treaties were made, with two of them being most important: The Geneva Protocol (1925) and Chemical Weapons Convention (1993).

New Zealand clearly condemns the use of any kinds of chemical weapons and is signatory to international treaties and conventions that work to limit the production, proliferation and use of inhumane conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction. Even though New Zealand is a small country and relatively isolated from the world in terms of its geographic position, it has never been isolated when playing their part in contributing to international security, and in this case New Zealand plays an active role in the UN, especially Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons.

Starting from the historic timeline, New Zealand has signed the Geneva Protocal and later ratified it, but the Geneva Protocol had some voids an deven the United States who proposed it didn’t ratify it until 1975. Furthermore, a number of countries submitted reservations when becoming parties to the Geneva Protocol, declaring that they only regarded the non-use obligations as applying to other parties and that these obligations would cease to apply if the prohibited weapons were used against them. Moreover, despite the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons after this conventio, chemical weapons have continued to be utilized during warfare. These factors in total proved that the protocol had low impact.

As mentioned, New Zealand understands the huge significance of the disposal of all chemical weapons aimed to be used in warfare and armed conflicts. Therefore, New Zealand is signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention and urges the the other states which haven’t retified or signed to join this convention. Since the CWC is accepted by 193 states, it is it is an effective way to destroy all chemical weapons intended to be used in warfare. And this is one of the key points of this convention, because this convention aims to eliminate the weapons of mass destruction which will be used in wars or armed conflicts, and states that it is permitted to use chemical weapons for peaceful intentions like agricultural or medical.

New Zealand additionally gives effect to CWC through the Chemical Weapons (Prohibition) Act (1996). Chemical Weapons Act is an act to promote the control of chemical weapons thus support CWC. And like in CWC, the act enables the use of chemicals regarding permitted reasons. The first part of the act prohibits the development, production, transfer or use of chemical weapons and charges the individuals in case of breach. The second part of the act estanblishes a reporting system in order to collect data from companies or individuals who are in charge of producing and transfering chemicals to ensure these chemicals are only used for acceptable intentions without considering conflicts. The third and last part of the act concerns the inspection regime established by the convention. This enables the authorities to access and inspect the facilities related to the chemicals listed in the schedules of the convention.

New Zealand is a member to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and has actively taken part in it. OPCW is an organization that aims to implement the provisions of the CWC to achieve a world free of chemical weapons, and which chemicals are only used for peace and progress. New Zealand strongly supports OPCW’s mission and work, therefore has contributed exactly €1,168,828 to the OPCW. Additionally, New Zealand has contributed more than €84,000 to OPCW’s mission in Syria towards the full elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme and clarification of the facts related to the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria.

New Zealand believes that pursuing the path CWC and OPCW creates will be the most efficient way to overcome the global issue of chemical weapon posession and usage considering that the CWC is the most effective convention yet made regarding the destroyment of all chemical weapons.

REFERENCES

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/peace-rights-and-security/disarmament/weapons-of-mass-destruction/chemical-weapons-convention/#:~:text=New%20Zealand%20gives%20effect%20to,Centre%20for%20Chemistry%20and%20Technology>.

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/peace-rights-and-security/disarmament/weapons-of-mass-destruction/>

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/peace-rights-and-security/disarmament/>

<https://www.opcw.org/our-work/eliminating-chemical-weapons>

<https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/bills-and-laws/bills-digests/document/49PLLawBd18801/geneva-conventions-third-protocol-red-crystal-emblem#:~:text=New%20Zealand%20signed%20the%20Geneva,both%20on%208%20February%201988>.

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/new-zealand-%E2%80%93-our-place-world-and-our-defence-policy>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva_Protocol>

<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/national-practice/chemical-weapons-prohibition-act-1996>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chemical_Weapons_Act_1996>

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2023/11/new-zealand-contributes-over-eu72000-opcw-fund-regional-seminars>

<https://npasyria.com/en/97317/>

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/2020/11/New%20Zealand%20National%20Statement%20CSP-25.pdf

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022/01/ec98nat35

chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022/11/New%20Zealand%20Ministerial%20intervention%20CSP-27%20General%20Debate%202022.pdf